

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FILING PROPOSED RULES WITH
THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY Arkansas Department of Education
DIVISION School Improvement and Professional Development Section
DIVISION DIRECTOR _____
CONTACT PERSON Ms. Janinne Riggs
ADDRESS #4 State Capitol Mall, Room 406-B, Little Rock, AR 72201
PHONE NO. 501-682-4219 FAX NO. 501-682-5756 E-MAIL jriggs@arkedu.k12.ar.us

INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Please make copies of this form for future use.
- B. Please answer each question completely using layman terms. You may use additional sheets, if necessary.
- C. If you have a method of indexing your rules, please give the proposed citation after "Short Title of this Rule" below.
- D. Submit two (2) copies of this questionnaire & financial impact statement attached to the front of two (2) copies of your proposed rule and required documents. Mail or deliver to:

Donna K. Davis
Subcommittee on Administrative Rules and Regulations
Arkansas Legislative Council
Bureau of Legislative Research
Room 315, State Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201

- 1. What is the short title of this rule?
Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program and the Academic Distress Program
- 2. What is the subject of the proposed rule? **The subject of the proposed rule is to develop a single comprehensive testing, assessment, and accountability program which applies to and governs all public schools and school districts in the state to establish a program to identify, evaluate, and assist and advise public school districts in school improvement and academic distress.**
- 3. Is this rule required to comply with federal statute or regulations? Yes _____ No X _____
If yes, please provide the federal regulation and/or statute citation.
- 4. Was this rule filed under the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act?
Yes _____ No X _____
If yes, what is the effective date of the emergency rule?

When does the emergency rule expire?

Will this emergency rule be promulgated under the permanent provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act? Yes _____ No _____

5. Is this a new rule? Yes _____ No X _____ If yes, please provide a brief summary explaining the regulation.

Does this repeal an existing rule? Yes _____ No X _____ If yes, a copy of the repealed rule is to be included with your completed questionnaire. If it is being replaced with a new rule, please provide a summary of the rule giving an explanation of what the rule does.

Is this an amendment to an existing rule? Yes X No _____ If yes, please attach a markup showing the changes in the existing rule and a summary of the substantive changes. **NOTE: The summary should explain what the amendment does, and the mark-up copy should be clearly labeled "mark-up."**

6. Cite the state law grants the authority for this proposed rule. If codified, please give Arkansas Code citation. **Ark. Code Ann. § 6-11-105, 25-15-201 et seq., Act 1467 of 2003 and Act 35 of 2nd Extraordinary Session of the 84th Ark. General Assembly**

7. What is the purpose of this proposed rule? Why is it necessary?
The subject of the proposed rule is to develop a single comprehensive testing, assessment, and accountability program which applies to and governs all public schools and school districts in the state to establish a program to identify, evaluate, and assist and advise public school districts in school improvement and academic distress. The proposed rule incorporates the requirements of Act 35 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the Arkansas 84th General Assembly.

8. Will a public hearing be held on this proposed rule? Yes X No _____
If yes, please complete the following:

Date: **May 12, 2004**

Time: **10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Place: **Arkansas Department of Education**

9. When does the public comment period expire for permanent promulgation? (Must provide a date.) **May 13, 2004**

10. What is the proposed effective date of this proposed rule? (Must provide a date.)
July 1, 2004

11. Do you expect this rule to be controversial? Yes X No _____
If yes, please explain. **The rule is expected to be controversial due to the following: the requirement to have tests results back by July 1 requires that the tests be given several weeks earlier than in past years; mandatory retention of students; with holding course credit; and labeling of schools.**

12. Please give the names of persons, groups, or organizations that you expect to comment on these rules. Please provide their position (for or against) if known. **Comments are expected from administrators and educators; superintendents, principals and curriculum specialists.**

SUMMARY

Summary of proposed rule

1. Expands the existing testing program to include a norm-referenced exam at grades K-9
2. Establishes a value-added system of reporting
3. Increases the professional development requirement from 30 hours annually to 60 hours annually
4. Requires school districts to establish school calendars that do not jeopardize or limit valid testing and comparison of student learning gains
5. Establishes a system for developing student academic improvement plans
6. Requires retention for students not participating in the required student academic improvement plan
7. Requires that course credit is with-hold for high school students not participating in the required student academic improvement plan
8. Requires parents to be notified as to the student academic improvement plan requirement
9. Requires parents to be notified if students in grades K-2 have substantial deficiency in reading and that those students be provided supplemental services
10. Requires that a school rating system be established and implemented beginning with the 2009-2010 school year

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT Arkansas Department of Education
DIVISION School Improvement and Professional Development Section
PERSON COMPLETING THIS STATEMENT Janinne Riggs
TELEPHONE NO 501-682-4219 FAX NO 501-682-5756 EMAIL jriggs@arkedu.k12.ar.us

To comply with Act 1104 of 1995, please complete the following Financial Impact Statement and file two copies with the questionnaire and proposed rules.

SHORT TITLE OF THIS RULE

Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program and the Academic Distress Program

1. Does this proposed, amended, or repealed rule or regulation have a financial impact? Yes X No
2. If you believe that the development of a financial impact statement is so speculative as to be cost prohibited, please explain. **Act 35 requires that students not meeting proficiency must participate in remediation or be retained. The ADE has no way of determining the specific remediation costs that might be implemented by local school districts and the number of students who might be retained. Act 35 establishes a specific system of rewards for schools meeting specific performance and improvement goals. The ADE has no way of determining the number of schools who will qualify.**
3. If the purpose of this rule or regulation is to implement a federal rule or regulation, please give the incremental cost for implementing the regulation. Please indicate if the cost provided is the cost of the program.

Current Fiscal Year

General Revenue
Federal Funds
Cash Funds
Special Revenue
Other (Identify)

Total

Next Fiscal Year

General Revenue \$8,070,950
Federal Funds
Cash Funds
Special Revenue
Other (Identify)

Total \$8,070,950

4. What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to any party subject to the proposed, amended, or repealed rule or regulation? Identify the party subject to the proposed regulation and explain how they are affected. **Department of Education**

Current Fiscal Year

\$

Next Fiscal Year

\$ See above

5. What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to the agency to implement this regulation?

Current Fiscal Year

\$ _____

Next Fiscal Year

\$ See above _____

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT OF PROPOSED REGULATION
(In compliance with Acts 884 and 1253 of 1995)

Regulation Title: **Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program and the Academic Distress Program**

Summary Description of Regulatory Proposal: **To implement a single comprehensive accountability system**

Cite Statutory Authority for this Regulatory Proposal: **Act 35 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the 84th General Assembly**

- I. Fiscal Impact on the Department: (include whether impacts are non-recurring or recurring)
 - A. Resources Required - Personnel, equipment, office space. **recurring**
 - B. Time Required for Implementation. **recurring**
 - C. Procedural Changes.
 - D. Other.
- II. Fiscal Impact on Local School District or Others? (Include whether impacts are non-recurring or recurring)
 - A. Resources Required - Personnel, equipment, office space. **recurring**
 - B. Time Required for Implementation. **recurring**
 - C. Procedural Changes.
 - D. Other.
- III. Additional Comments.

Prepared by: (Name) **Janinne Riggs**
(Title) **Assistant Director**
(Date) **April 8, 2004**

Arkansas Department of Education
Proposed Rules Governing the
Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program
And the Academic Distress Program

1.0 Regulatory Authority

- 1.01 These Rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program (ACTAAP).
- 1.02 The State Board of Education promulgated these Rules pursuant to implementation of Act 1467 of 2003 and Ark. Code Ann. § 6-11-105 and Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-201 et seq., and Act 35 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the 84th Arkansas General Assembly.
- ~~1.03 These Rules replace previously adopted Rules Governing Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program dated September 13, 1999, and Rules Governing Professional Development June 12, 2000, and Rules Identifying and Governing School Districts in Academic or Fiscal Distress.~~

2.0 Purposes of Rules

- 2.01 To develop a single comprehensive testing, assessment and accountability program, which applies to and governs all public schools and public school districts in Arkansas.
- 2.02 To develop a single comprehensive testing, assessment and accountability program which utilizes the most current and effective testing, evaluation and assessment research information designed to achieve the following:
 - 2.02.1 Clear academic standards that are periodically reviewed and revised;
 - 2.02.2 Professional development standards for all administrators, teachers and instructional support personnel;
 - 2.02.3 Expected achievement levels;
 - 2.02.4 Reporting on student achievement and other indicators;
 - 2.02.5 School and school district evaluation data;
 - 2.02.6 A system of sanctions and rewards based on performance of schools and school districts; and
 - 2.02.7 Compliance with current federal and state law and State Board of Education policies.

- 2.03 To ensure that all students in the public schools of Arkansas have an equal opportunity to demonstrate grade-level academic proficiency through the application of knowledge and skills in the core academic subjects consistent with state curriculum frameworks, performance standards and assessments.
 - 2.04 To improve student learning and classroom instruction and to support high academic standards for all students, including identifiable subgroups, by establishing the provisions, procedures and requirements for the student assessment program.
 - 2.05 To require point-in-time intervention when it is determined that a student(s) is not performing at grade level.
 - 2.06 To outline testing and assessment security and confidentiality requirements.
 - 2.07 To establish a program to identify, evaluate, assist and advise public school districts in academic distress.
- 3.0 Definitions – For the purpose of these Rules, the following terms mean:
- 3.01 “Academic Content Standards” – a series of documents that specify what a student enrolled in an Arkansas Public School should know and be able to do. These Academic Content Standards also provide the foundation for development of the State assessment system.
 - 3.02 “Academic Distress” – a classification assigned to any public school district in which 75% or more of its students perform at the “below basic” performance level on the criterion-referenced assessments administered in that district.
 - 3.03 “Academic Improvement Plan” – a plan detailing supplemental or intervention and remedial instruction, or both, in deficient academic areas for any student who is not proficient on a portion or portions of the state-mandated criterion-referenced assessments.
 - 3.04 “Adequate Yearly Progress” – the level of academic improvement required of public schools or school districts on the state-mandated criterion-referenced assessments and/or other indicators as required in the ACTAAP, which shall comply with State and Federal law.
 - 3.05 “Alternative Education Intervention Program” – instructional strategies extending learning opportunities employing research-based innovative strategies.
 - 3.06 “Arkansas Comprehensive Assessment Program” – means the testing component of Arkansas Comprehensive, Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program, which shall consist of developmentally appropriate assessments for kindergarten, Grades one and two, national

norm-referenced tests in Grades 3 through 9, any other assessments as required by the State Board of Education, criterion-references tests for Grades 3 through 8, or other assessments which are based on researched best practices as determined by qualified experts which would be in compliance with federal and state law, and End-of-Course tests for designated grades and content areas.

- 3.07 “Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program” – means a comprehensive system that focus on high academic standards, professional development, student assessments, and accountability for all schools.
- 3.08 “Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP)” – a plan developed by a local school team based on an analysis of student performance data and other relevant data that provides a plan of action to address deficiencies in student performance as evidenced on the grade-level benchmark assessments. This plan shall be reviewed annually and monitored at least every two years. Components of the plan include professional development, technology, and materials and resources necessary to carry out the activities of the plan. Additionally, this plan shall become the application for all instructional federal programs as administered by the Department of Education.
- 3.09 “Awards” – financial or other recognition of a public school structured to recognize schools that demonstrate and maintain high performance over time and to recognize schools that demonstrate growth on the state-mandated indicators. Awards also can be used to highlight individual schools so that their practices can be adopted in other schools and districts across the state.
- 3.10 “Benchmarks/Grade-Level Benchmarks” – Academic Content Standards and/or grade-level statements of what a student should know and be able to do. The Grade-Level Benchmarks provide guidance to classroom teachers in planning instruction aligned with the Academic Content Standards.
- 3.11 “Board” – The Arkansas State Board of Education.
- 3.12 “Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT)” – an assessment required by state statute, rule or regulation which is designed by the State to measure student performance/achievement on the State’s Academic Content Standards.
- 3.13 “Department” – The Arkansas Department of Education
- 3.14 “District Improvement Plan” – a compilation of the individual school improvement plans from schools across the district. The main focus of the district improvement plan shall be to ensure that all students have an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency on all portions of state-mandated criterion-referenced assessments.

- 3.15 “Early Intervention” – a short-term, intensive, focused individualized instruction developed from ongoing, daily, systemic assessment that occurs while a child is in the initial, kindergarten through grade one (K -1), stages of learning.
- 3.16 “Elementary School” – public school(s) having some combination of grades kindergarten through four (K – 4).
- 3.17 “End-of-Course Test” – an assessment taken at the completion of a course of study to determine whether a student demonstrates attainment of the knowledge and skills necessary for proficiency in that course.
- 3.18 “Grade Level” – performance of a student (or group of students) at the proficient level on benchmark assessments at the specified grade that is age-appropriate for that student(s).
- 3.19 “High School” – public school(s) having some combination of grades 9 – 12.
- 3.20 “Longitudinal Tracking” – means tracking individual student yearly academic achievement gains based on scheduled and annual assessments.
- 3.21 “Middle School” – public school(s) having some combination of grades five through eight (5 – 8).
- 3.22 “Norm-Referenced Test (NRT)” – an assessment required by state law, rule or regulation to measure the performance/achievement of Arkansas students relative to the achievement of students who comprised the norm or standardization group for a particular commercial instrument.
- 3.23 “Public School District/Public School” – those school districts and schools (including open-enrollment charter schools) created pursuant to Title 6 of the Arkansas Code and subject to the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program except specifically excluding those schools or educational programs created by or receiving authority to exist pursuant to §6-15-501; §9-28-205, and §12-29-301 through §12-29-310, or other provisions of Arkansas law.
- 3.24 “Remediation” – a process of providing corrective, specialized supplemental instruction to help a student overcome academic deficiencies and achieve proficiency.
- 3.25 “Sanction” – intervention by the state to assist teaching and learning at a public school or a public school district that fails to meet expected performance goals on the state-mandated criterion-referenced assessments and/or other indicators.
- 3.26 “School Improvement” – the initial classification applied to a school that fails to meet adequate yearly progress for two successive years.

- 3.27 “Secure Examination or Assessment” – an assessment instrument, materials or other student achievement evaluation method required by State statute, rule or regulation that is administered to assess student performance or achievement and takes place on the dates specified on the testing/assessment calendar developed by the Director of the Department.
 - 3.28 “Uniform Readiness Screening” - uniform, objective evaluation procedures specifically formulated for children entering public school for the first time that are intended for either kindergarten or first grade, as appropriate, and developed or adopted by the Board.
 - 3.29 “Value-Added Computations of Student Gains” – statistical analyses of the educational impact of the school’s instructional delivery system on individual student learning using a comparison of previous and post student achievement gains.
- 4.0 Academic Content Standards
- 4.01 The Board shall establish clear, specific, challenging academic content standards, which define what students shall know and be able to do in each content area.
 - 4.02 The Board shall establish a schedule for periodic review and revision of academic content standards to ensure Arkansas academic content standards are rigorous and equip students to compete in the global workforce. For each review, the Department will provide the following:
 - 4.02.1 Study and consideration of academic content standards from across the nation and international levels as appropriate;
 - 4.02.2 Study and consideration of evaluations from national groups or organizations as appropriate;
 - 4.02.3 Committees composed of Arkansas teachers and instructional supervisory personnel from public schools, assisted by teachers from institutions of higher education;
 - 4.02.4 Review and input by the Departments of Higher Education and Workforce Education as well as community members; and
 - 4.02.5 Public dissemination of revised academic content standards on the Department Website.
 - 4.03 The Board shall provide for external review by nationally-recognized content experts in the discipline/area under consideration.
 - 4.04 The Board shall establish a clear, concise system of reporting the academic performance of each school on the state’s mandated criterion-referenced assessments, which conform with current state and federal law.

- 4.05 Each local school/school district shall engage in a procedure that will assure that the ~~local curriculum and instructional delivery are aligned with the most current approved revision of the academic content standards~~ academic standards for every level of the grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) education system are aligned and education financial resources are aligned with student performance expectations at each level of the grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) education system.
- 5.0 Professional Development
- 5.01 Time Requirement
- 5.01.1 All certified employees of public schools shall complete ~~thirty (30)~~ sixty (60) required, approved hours of professional development each year. The ~~30~~ 60-hour professional development requirements must be fulfilled between July 1 and June 30 of each school year. An alternative twelve-month time period may be substituted for districts with unique staff development needs, with prior approval of the Director of Education.
- 5.01.2 Approval of professional development hours shall be based on the requirements within these Rules, Board priorities, student achievement data, and the ACSIP plan. Improvement of student achievement shall be the prerequisite goal of all professional development.
- 5.01.3 Approved professional development activities, which occur during the instructional day or outside the employee's annual contract days may apply toward the ~~30~~ 60-hour minimum professional development requirement. This shall not diminish the ~~185-~~ 190-day total required for an annual contract.
- 5.01.4 A three-hour graduate-level, college credit course counts as 12 hours of professional development, if the college credit is related to and enhances the teacher's knowledge of the subject area in which the teacher is currently teaching or is part of the requirements for the teacher to obtain additional certification in a subject matter that has been designated by the Department of Education as having critical shortage of teachers. pursuant to Act 1728 of 2003. No more than half of the required ~~30~~ 60-hours of professional development time may be met through college credit hours.
- 5.02 Monitoring and Evaluation of Professional Development
- 5.02.1 Regular monitoring activities of the professional development requirements within these Rules shall occur annually when the Standards Assurance Unit directly monitors schools and when the School Improvement Planning Unit directly assists schools in ACSIP. A representative sample of professional development

records of certified staff shall be checked against the school professional development plan within ACSIP. Any discrepancy may result in a comprehensive verification of professional development activities required for certified staff.

5.02.2 The criterion for evaluating the impact of professional development shall be the improvement of student achievement on State criterion-referenced assessments and other related indicators as defined by ACTAAP. These data shall be used to revise ACSIP and the professional development design associated with the local improvement plan.

5.03 Approval and Monitoring of Waiver Days and Early Release Time for the 2004-2005 School Year.

5.03.1 Schools seeking early release time and/or waiver days for additional approved professional development shall apply to the Department no later than August 1 preceding the start of the school year.

5.03.2 Applications for early release time and/or waiver days shall be reviewed and approved by the Department.

5.03.3 Waiver days and early release time will only be approved to accommodate professional development hours beyond those required in 5.01.1.

5.03.4 No school shall receive approval for early release time and/or waiver days, which exceed a combined maximum of ~~30~~ 60 hours.

5.03.5 The Department will study usage and make a recommendation to the State Board of Education regarding waiver days prior to the 2005-2006 school year.

5.04 Approved Professional Development Activities

5.04.1 All approved professional development activities, whether individual or school-wide, shall be based on the improvement of student achievement on State criterion-referenced assessments and increasing student achievement and academic performance.

5.04.2 To be eligible, professional development activities must produce teaching and administrative knowledge and skills designed to improve students' academic performance.

5.04.3 Approved professional development activities may include conferences, workshops, institutes, individual learning, mentoring, peer coaching, study groups, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification, distance learning, internships, and approved college/university course work consistent with National Staff Development Council Standards.

5.04.4 Administrative faculty meetings and administrative organization, or clerical work in the classroom or on school improvement activities shall not count as approved professional development.

5.04.5 Certified employees in positions not directly related to instructional activities shall be responsible for completing ~~30~~ 60 approved hours of professional development each year. However, the focus of their professional development may be in those areas specifically related to their job assignments.

5.05 Required Focus Areas for Professional Development

5.05.1 All approved professional development activities shall relate to the following areas: content (K – 12); instructional strategies; assessment; advocacy/leadership; systemic change process; standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment; supervision; mentoring/coaching; educational technology; principles of learning/developmental stages; cognitive research; and building a collaborative learning community. At least six (6) of the ~~30~~ 60 hours of required professional development shall be in the area of educational technology

5.05.2 Pursuant to Act 603 of 2003, each teacher shall be required to have no less than two (2) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies. These two (2) hours may be included in the ~~30~~ 60 hours required for professional development.

5.05.3 Pursuant to Act 603 of 2003 each administrator shall be required to have no less than three (3) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. These three (3) hours ~~are in addition to~~ may be included in the required ~~30~~ 60 hours of professional development.

5.05.4 For each administrator, the 30-hour professional development requirement shall include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership and fiscal management as developed or approved by the Department.

5.06 Compliance

5.06.1 Failure to comply with the requirements of these Rules may result in a recommendation to the Board for a loss of accreditation or other sanctions as set out in the Arkansas Standards for Accreditation.

5.07 Funding

5.06.1 Professional Development Funding provided under Act 59 of the Second Extraordinary Session of 2003 must be directed to activities that meet the conditions described in this section.

~~6.0 — Student Performance Assessment System~~

6.0 Arkansas Comprehensive Assessment Program

The Board shall establish a statewide ~~single~~ assessment system for Grades K through 12 to be implemented in each public school in the State by the Department. All districts shall comply with the requirements of the assessment system. Failure to do so shall result in a recommendation to the Board for Probationary status or loss of accreditation as set out in the Standards for Accreditation.

Local district school boards shall not establish school calendars that jeopardize or limit the valid testing and comparison of student learning gains.

6.01 Kindergarten: The Board shall adopt and the Department shall implement a developmentally-appropriate, uniform school readiness screening to validate a child's school readiness as part of a comprehensive evaluation decision. Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year and thereafter, the Department shall require that all school districts administer the uniform school readiness-screening instrument to each kindergarten student in the district prior to or upon the entry into kindergarten. Children who enter public school for the first time in first grade must be administered the uniform school readiness screening instrument as modified for use in first grade to determine placement.

6.02 Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2: The Department shall select a developmentally-appropriate assessment to be administered to all students in kindergarten, Grades one (1) and two (2) in reading and mathematics.

6.03 Criterion-Referenced Assessments - Grades three through eight and high school:

6.03.1 The Department shall develop and implement assessments for public school students ~~at the elementary and middle level grades in grades three (3) through eight (8) as well as~~ End-of-Course testing for Algebra I and geometry; and a high school literacy test to be given at the end of Grade 11, which are criterion-referenced and which measure application of knowledge and skills in reading and writing literacy, mathematics and, as funds are available, in science and social studies as determined by the State Board of Education.

- 6.03.2 All criterion-referenced assessments shall be based on the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and Academic Content Standards.
- 6.03.3 All students in Grades 3 – 8 as well as all students enrolled in courses for which End-of-Course assessments are administered, shall take the criterion-referenced assessments on the testing dates established by the Department. This authority shall include field testing and any other requirements needed to establish fully-developed assessment instruments and methodologies.
- 6.03.4 Each school district shall administer criterion-referenced assessments to its students according to procedures established by the Director of Education and specified in the applicable assessment administration materials.
- 6.03.5 The Department shall establish mandatory training sessions for local district testing coordinators and other appropriate school personnel to ensure understanding of the administration of assessments and effective use of assessment reporting data to improve classroom instruction and learning to provide program evaluation;
- 6.03.6 The superintendent or his/her designee in each school district shall be responsible for coordinating all local assessment activities including:
 - 6.03.6.1 Scheduling testing times of all affected campuses according to the testing calendar developed by the Department;
 - 6.03.6.2 Ensuring that security is maintained as specified in the appropriate testing administration materials;
 - 6.03.6.3 Ensuring that all district personnel involved in the testing have been properly trained as specified by the Department;
 - 6.03.6.4 Ensuring that all testing instruments are administered to all students according to the procedures established by the Director of Education;
 - 6.03.6.5 Ensuring that all assessment documents and student identification information are properly and accurately coded; and
 - 6.03.6.6 Attesting whether ALL students have participated in the appropriate grade-level assessment(s).
 - 6.03.6.7 Recommending for adoption by local school boards a school calendar that in no way jeopardizes or limits the

valid testing and comparison of students' learning gains.

6.03.7 Accounting for Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students

6.03.7.1 Each student in the specified grades shall participate as outlined in the test coordinator's handbook. A student shall participate in the Arkansas Alternative Assessment Program only upon the formal determination of :

- (i) The student's individual education program (IEP) committee, as documented in the student's individual educational program; or
- (ii) The student's language proficiency assessment committee, as documented in the student's permanent record file.

6.03.7.2 The Individual Education Program (IEP) committee shall determine whether or not participation in the standard state assessment program is appropriate for students with IEPs. Students with disabilities for whom it is deemed inappropriate to take the standard state assessments (Benchmarks and End-of-Course) with the established accommodations shall participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program following the guidelines established by the Board.

6.03.7.3 A Language Proficiency Assessment committee shall recommend the Arkansas Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Alternate Assessment Program based on limited English proficiency only, following the guidelines established by the Board. The committee shall assess English proficiency growth annually to determine appropriate participation in the standard state assessment program or the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. The intent of this section is to ensure that students participate in all of the standard state assessment programs as soon as appropriately possible. LEP students may participate in the alternate assessment program for a period which shall not exceed three (3) years before entering the standard state assessment.

6.03.7.4 Scores for students with disabilities or English language learners participating in the Alternate Assessment Program shall be reported with other assessment results from the school.

- 6.03.7.5 LEP students with less than one year in a U.S. school will not be required to take the State required literacy benchmark test or the Grade 11 literacy test. Districts may exercise this option. LEP students must take the appropriate mathematics test.
- 6.03.7.6 The appropriate test administration materials shall specify any allowable accommodations available to students participating in the administration of standard state assessments.
- 6.03.7.7 All students enrolled in a State-tested grade shall be accounted for in the State Assessment System.
- 6.03.7.8 A Technical Advisory Committee composed of nationally-recognized testing experts and psychometricians shall be selected by the Director of Education and shall advise the Department in all technical aspects of the assessment system.

6.04 ~~Nationally~~ Norm-Referenced Assessments

- 6.04.1 The Board shall adopt a ~~national~~ norm-referenced ~~assessment test~~ in Grade 5 and 3 through Grade 9 in mathematics and reading, which shall be administered by the Department annually.
 - ~~6.04.1.1 Each school district may choose to administer national norm-referenced tests at other grades between Grade 2 and Grade 9 with the cost paid from state funds when additional revenue is added annually to the Department of Education Public School Fund Budget to cover the cost of tests, scoring and reporting.~~
- 6.04.2 Each school district shall administer the norm-referenced assessments to its students according to procedures established by the Department and specified in the applicable test administration materials.
- 6.04.3 The Department shall establish mandatory training sessions for local district testing coordinators and other appropriate school personnel to ensure understanding of the norm-referenced assessments, proper administration of assessments, security, and effective use of the assessment reporting data to improve classroom instruction and learning.
- 6.04.4 The superintendent of each district or his/her representative shall be responsible for coordinating all local norm-referenced assessment activities, including:

- 6.04.4.1 Scheduling testing times of all affected campuses according to the testing calendar developed by the Department;
- 6.04.4.2 Ensuring that security is maintained as specified in the appropriate testing/assessment administration materials;
- 6.04.4.3 Ensuring that all district personnel involved in the assessment system have been properly trained as specified by the Department; and
- 6.04.4.4 Ensuring that all assessment instruments are administered to all eligible students according to the procedures established by the Department.

6.05 National Assessment of Educational Progress

- 6.05.1 Selected schools shall participate in any or all components of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- 6.05.2 Any school that fails to participate in the administration of any NAEP assessment may be subject to probationary status as set out in the Standards for Accreditation.

6.06 Security and Confidentiality

- 6.06.1 Violation of the security or confidential integrity of any assessment is prohibited.
- 6.06.2 The Board shall sanction a person who engages in conduct prohibited by this section, as provided under Arkansas Code §6-17-405 and following the Process for Certificate Invalidation as approved by the Board. Additionally, the Board may sanction a school district and/or school in which conduct prohibited in this section occurs.
- 6.06.3 Procedures for maintaining the security and confidential integrity of all assessment instruments and procedures shall be specified in the appropriate test administration instructions. Conduct that violates the security or confidential integrity of an assessment is defined as any departure from either the requirements established by the Director of the Department for the administration of the assessment or from the procedures specified in the applicable test administration materials. Conduct of this nature may include, but is not limited to the following acts and omissions:
 - 6.06.3.1 Viewing secure assessment materials;

- 6.06.3.2 Duplicating secure assessment materials;
- 6.06.3.3 Disclosing the contents of any portion of secure assessment materials;
- 6.06.3.4 Providing, suggesting, or indicating to an examinee a response or answer to any secure assessment items;
- 6.06.3.5 Aiding or assisting an examinee with a response or answer to any secure assessment item;
- 6.06.3.6 Changing or altering any response or answer of an examinee to a secure assessment item;
- 6.06.3.7 Failing to follow the specified testing procedures or to proctor students;
- 6.06.3.8 Failing to administer the assessment on the designated testing dates;
- 6.06.3.9 Encouraging or assisting an individual to engage in the conduct described in this subsection;
- 6.06.3.10 Failing to report to appropriate authority that an individual has engaged in conduct set forth in this section;
- 6.06.3.11 Failing to follow the specified procedures and required criteria for alternate assessments; or,
- 6.06.3.12 Failing to return the secured test booklets back to the testing company in a timely manner.

6.06.4 The superintendent of each school district shall develop procedures to ensure the security and confidential integrity of all assessment instruments and test items. The superintendent shall be responsible for immediately notifying the Department in writing of conduct that violates the security or confidential integrity of an examination or assessment.

7.0 Student Accountability and Performance Reporting

- 7.01 The Board shall establish four (4) performance levels for each criterion-referenced assessment administered as part of ACTAAP. Those performance levels shall be advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. Performance levels shall be established for mathematics and reading/language arts independently.

- 7.02 The following numerical scores define the performance levels on the criterion-referenced assessments for advanced, proficient, basic and below-basic.

Grade 4 Mathematics		Grade 4 Literacy	
Performance Standards		Performance Standards	
Advanced	250 & above	Advanced	250 & above
Proficient	200 – 249	Proficient	200-249
Basic	155-199	Basic	179-199
Below Basic	154 & below	Below Basic	178 & below

Grade 6 Mathematics		Grade 6 Literacy	
Performance Standards		Performance Standards	
Advanced	250 & above	Advanced	250 & above
Proficient	200 – 249	Proficient	200-249
Basic	155-199	Basic	168-199
Below Basic	154 & below	Below Basic	167 & below

Grade 8 Mathematics		Grade 8 Literacy	
Performance Standards		Performance Standards	
Advanced	250 & above	Advanced	250 & above
Proficient	200 – 249	Proficient	200-249
Basic	149-199	Basic	164-199
Below Basic	148 & below	Below Basic	163 & below

End of Course Geometry		End of Course Algebra I	
Performance Standards		Performance Standards	
Advanced	250 & above	Advanced	250 & above
Proficient	200 – 249	Proficient	200-249
Basic	154-199	Basic	151-199
Below Basic	153 & below	Below Basic	150 & below

Literacy (Grade 11)			
Performance Standards			
Advanced	250 & above		
Proficient	200 – 249		
Basic	169-199		
Below Basic	168 & below		

- 7.03 By the year 2013-2014 all students are expected to perform at the proficient level or above.
- 7.04 Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, any student failing to achieve at the proficient level on the State mandated CRT, that student shall be evaluated by school personnel, who shall jointly develop, with the student's parents, a student Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) to assist the student in achieving the expected standard in subject area(s) where performance is deficient. The AIP shall describe the parent's role and responsibilities as well as the consequences for the student's failure to participate in the Plan.

- 7.04.1 The AIP shall be prepared using the format designed by the Department of Education. However, the local school may expand the format as deemed necessary.
- 7.04.2 The AIP shall be developed cooperatively by appropriate teachers and/or other school personnel knowledgeable about the student's performance or responsible for the remediation. An analysis of student deficiencies based on test data and previous student records shall be available for use in developing the Plan. The plan shall be signed by the appropriate school administrator and the parent/guardian.
- 7.04.3 The AIP should be flexible, should contain multiple remediation methods and strategies, and should include an intensive instructional program different from the previous year's program. Examples of strategies and methods include, but are not limited to, computer assisted instruction, tutorial, extended year, learning labs within the school day, Saturday school, double blocking instruction in deficient areas during the school day, etc.
- 7.04.4 The AIP shall include formative assessment strategies and shall be revised periodically based on results from the formative assessments.
- 7.04.5 The AIP shall include standards-based supplemental/remedial strategies aligned with the child's deficiencies.
- 7.04.6 A highly qualified teacher and/or a highly qualified paraprofessional under the guidance of a highly qualified teacher shall provide instructional delivery under the AIP.
- 7.04.7 The AIP should contain an implementation timeline that assures the maximum time for remedial instruction.
- 7.04.8 AIPs should be individualized; however, similar deficiencies based on test data, may be remediated through group instruction.
- 7.04.9 In any instance where a student with disabilities identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that already addresses any academic area or areas in which the student is not proficient on state-mandated criterion-referenced assessments, the individualized education program shall serve to meet the requirement of an AIP.
- 7.05 Retention for failure to participate in the Academic Improvement Plan
 - 7.05.1 School districts should notify parents of remediation requirements and retention consequences for failure to participate in the required remediation at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school

year. Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, this information shall be included in the student handbook.

- 7.05.2 Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, students in Grades one through six, identified for an AIP who do not participate in the remediation program shall be retained.
- 7.05.3 Retention for failure to participate in the academic improvement plan shall expand by at least one (1) grade level for each subsequent academic year after implementation, in the following manner: e.g. 2006-2007 Grades one through seven; 2007-2008 Grades one through eight, etc.
- 7.05.4 Remedial instruction provided during high school years (Grades 7 – 12) may not be in lieu of English, mathematics, science or social studies, or other core subjects required for graduation.
- 7.05.5 Any student who does not score at the proficient level on the criterion-referenced assessments in reading, writing and mathematics shall continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met or the student is not subject to compulsory school attendance.
- 7.05.6 Any student that has an AIP and fails to remediate, but scores at the proficient level on the criterion-referenced assessments, shall not be retained.
- 7.05.7 Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, students not proficient on the End-of-Course tests or on the Grade 11 Literacy test, shall participate in a remediation program to receive credit for the corresponding course.
- 7.06 The results of End-of-Course assessments shall become a part of each student's transcript or permanent record. Each course for which a student completes the assessment shall be recorded with the performance level (advanced, proficient, basic or below-basic).
- 7.07 The Department shall implement a statistical system that shall provide the best estimates of classroom, school, and school district effects on student progress based on established, value-added longitudinal calculations, which shall measure the difference in a student's previous year's achievement compared to the current year achievement for the purposes of improving student achievement, accountability, and recognition.
 - 7.07.1 The approach used by the Department shall be in alignment with federal statutes and developed in 2004-2005 to collect data to allow research and evaluation of student achievement growth models.

7.07.2 The approach shall include value-added longitudinal calculations with sufficient transparency in the model's conception and operation to allow others in the field to replicate the results.

8.0 Reading Deficiency for Students in Kindergarten through Grade Two

8.01 Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading shall be given intensive reading instruction based on research-based comprehensive reading instructional strategies as recommended by the Department of Education.

8.01.1 During the 2004-2005 school year, the State Board of Education shall establish substantial deficiency in reading based on performance levels as set from the Kindergarten – Grade Two assessments.

8.02 The parent or guardian of any student identified with a substantial reading deficiency shall be notified in writing to include the following:

8.02.1 That the child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading;

8.02.2 A description of the current services that are provided to the child; and,

8.02.3 A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.

9.0 School Performance Reporting and Accountability

9.01 The Department of Education shall provide analyses of data produced by the Arkansas Comprehensive Assessment Program and other reliable measures of student learning to determine classroom, school, and school district academic performance.

9.01.1 Student performance trend data shall be one of the components used in developing objectives of the school improvement plan, internal evaluations of instructional and administrative personnel, assignment of staff, allocation of resources, acquisition of instructional materials and technology, performance-based budgeting, and assignment of students into educational programs of the local school program.

9.02 Each school shall develop one (1) Arkansas Comprehensive, School Improvement Plan (ACSIP) focused on student achievement. This requirement is intended to focus the school/school district annually on the school's performance data for the purposes of improved student performance, based on data and the performance of students on the state assessment system.

- 9.03 The purpose of ACSIP is to provide equal opportunity for all students, including identifiable subgroups, to meet the expected performance levels established by the Board on all State assessments.
- 9.04 Schools and/or school districts failing to meet the student performance level established in these Rules shall engage in any or all required school improvement strategies – including professional development – as mandated by the improvement plan and/or by the Department.
 - 9.04.1 The following subgroups must be included in the school/school district data disaggregation:
 - 9.04.1.1 Students with Disabilities
 - 9.04.1.2 Students who are English Language Learners
 - 9.04.1.3 Economically Disadvantaged Students
 - 9.04.1.4 Ethnic Subgroups
 - 9.04.1.4.1 Caucasian
 - 9.04.1.4.2 African American
 - 9.04.1.4.3 Hispanic
- 9.05 The Department, in keeping with the requirements of federal legislation, shall establish a system for determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) separately for mathematics and literacy. Schools that meet the AYP determination will have ALL students meeting the goal of 100% proficient on or before school year 2013-2014.
 - 9.05.1 The Department will determine for each school in the state the percent of students performing at the proficient or advanced levels. This percentage will be determined by computing the sum of students proficient or advanced for the most recent three years across each grade for which there is a criterion-referenced assessment. That sum is divided by the total number of students assessed across those three years and grades. This number shall include students taking alternate assessments. The percentage shall be determined separately for mathematics and reading/literacy.
 - 9.05.2 The AYP starting point will be determined for grade-level clusters K- 5; 6 – 8; and 9 – 12 and separately for mathematics and reading/literacy.
 - 9.05.3 The AYP starting point will be determined by ranking each school within the grade-level by the percent proficient. Additionally, the ranking will include the total student enrollment for those grades using October 1, 2002, data.
 - 9.05.4 The Department will determine the school that contains the 20th percent student of total enrollment – starting from the school with the lowest percent proficient and counting upward. The percent

proficient of that school becomes the “starting point” for determining AYP for that grade-level cluster and content area.

- 9.05.5 The Department will compute the gap between the “starting point” and the goal of 100% proficient. Based on 12 years to reach the goal, the annual growth will be known as the “Adequate Yearly Progress” for that grade-level cluster and content area. The following table establishes the starting point, adequate yearly progress, and projected goal for each year of the next twelve years. Following the administration of each annual test, the Department of Education shall compute a confidence interval around the established AYP values. The confidence interval shall be computed at the rate of 0.5 of one standard deviation based on aggregate scores. Schools/school districts will meet the AYP if their percent proficient falls within the lower bound established by the confidence interval.

Calculating AYP Starting Points and Adequate Yearly Progress						
	K – 5 Literacy	K - 5 Math	6 - 8 Literacy	6 - 8 Math	9 - 12 Literacy	9 - 12 Math
Starting Point 01-02	31.8	28.2	18.1	15.3	19	10.4
AYP	5.68	5.98	6.83	7.06	6.75	7.47
Year 1: 02-03	37.48	34.18	24.93	22.36	25.75	17.87
Year 2: 03-04	43.16	40.16	31.76	29.42	32.5	25.34
Year 3: 04-05	48.84	46.14	38.59	36.48	39.25	32.81
Year 4: 05-06	54.52	52.12	45.42	43.54	46	40.28
Year 5: 06-07	60.2	58.1	52.25	50.6	52.75	47.75
Year 6: 07-08	65.88	64.08	59.08	57.66	59.5	55.22
Year 7: 08-09	71.56	70.06	65.91	64.72	66.25	62.69
Year 8: 09-10	77.24	76.04	72.74	71.78	73	70.16
Year 9: 10-11	82.92	82.02	79.57	78.84	79.75	77.63
Year 10: 11-12	88.6	88	86.4	85.9	86.5	85.1
Year 11: 12-13	94.28	93.98	93.23	92.96	93.25	92.57
Year 12: 13-14	99.96	99.96	100.06	100.02	100	100.04

- 9.06 Schools/school districts may choose either the three-year composite performance based on percent of students proficient (includes advanced) or the current year percent proficient, whichever is greater, in determining a school's AYP status.
- 9.07 Schools/School Districts failing to meet expected performance standards as established by the Board shall be subject to sanctions as specified in Section 9.0.
- 9.08 Schools/School Districts exemplifying exceptional performance levels and/or growth patterns shall be recognized for exemplary performance and will be eligible to participate in the rewards program.
- 10.0 School Improvement

- 10.01 Schools failing to meet Adequate Yearly Progress as determined under these Rules shall be classified in school improvement.
- 10.01.1 The first year a school fails to meet expected performance levels, that school shall be classified as on Alert Status. Any school classified on Alert Status shall be required to review and/or revise the school's ACSIP Plan with special attention given to State designated subgroup(s) which failed to meet expected performance levels.
- 10.01.2 The local school board president and the superintendent of a public school or school district identified by the Department in school improvement shall be notified in writing by the Department, via certified mail, return receipt requested, and the school district shall have a right to appeal to the Director of the Department. The written appeal must be received in the Office of the Director of Education within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of notice.
- 10.01.3 The second year a school fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress, that school shall be classified as Year 1 of School Improvement. Any school classified in Year 1 of School Improvement shall offer eligible students choice options to another school in the district not in school improvement.
- 10.01.4 The third year a school fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress, that school shall be classified as Year 2 of School Improvement. Any school classified in Year 2 of School Improvement shall offer eligible students supplementary services in keeping with federal guidelines in addition to continued choice options.
- 10.01.5 Should a school fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress in the fourth year, the Board shall advance that school into corrective action. Schools in corrective action must continue to offer choice and supplemental service options and the school must implement a plan, with the approval of the Department, having specified corrective actions.
- 10.01.6 Should a school fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress in the fifth year, the Board shall advance that school into restructuring. In restructuring the Department may require the school to dismiss staff and administrators, annex the school to another school that is not in school improvement, and/or take other such action as deemed necessary by the Department and the Board.
- 10.02 Once a school has been identified in school improvement, that school must make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years in both mathematics and literacy to be considered for removal.

- 10.03 Schools that receive Title I funds must meet all funding requirements as specified by federal guidelines. Schools that do not receive Title I funds must implement programming in keeping with the school's ACSIP Plan as revised.

11.0 School Rating System

- 11.01 Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, the State Board of Education will establish a system to establish two category levels for each school. One for the school's improvement gain and one based on performance. Prior to the 2008-2009 school year, the Department of Education will establish a working task force to develop the rating system. The task force shall include educators, parents, and business/community stakeholders.

12.0 Academic Distress – Procedures for Identification, Classification and Appeal of School Districts in Academic Distress

- 12.01 A school district for which 75% or more of the students completing the state's assessments perform at the below basic level shall be designated in Academic Distress. This computation shall collectively include students from each school in the district and from each grade for which a criterion-referenced assessment is given.
- 12.02 Within thirty calendar days (30) after the release of the state assessment results by the Department, the Department shall identify all school districts in Academic Distress and shall notify in writing each school district superintendent and board president via certified mail, return receipt requested.
- 12.03 A school district may appeal a determination of the Department identifying the district as an Academic Distress school district by filing an appeal in writing in the Office of the Director of the Department within (30) calendar days after receiving the notification, justifying why the district should not be identified as being in Academic Distress.
- 12.04 The Board shall render a written decision of a classification on a district's appeal of identification as an Academic Distress school district within sixty (60) calendar days of the district's written request.
- 12.05 The decision of the Board shall be final with no further right of appeal, except a school district may appeal to the Circuit Court of Pulaski County pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, A.C. A. §25-15-201 et seq.

11.0 Time Limitation of Academic Distress Status

- 11.01 A public school district identified as in academic distress shall have no more than two (2) consecutive school years beginning on July 1 following the date of notice of identification to be removed from academic distress status.

- 11.02 The Board may at any time take enforcement action on any school district in academic distress status including, but not limited to, annexation, consolidation, or reconstitution of a school district pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-1401 et seq.
- 11.03 If a public school district fails to be removed from academic distress status within the allowed two (2) year time period, the Board shall annex, consolidate or reconstitute the academic distress school district prior to July 1 of the next school year unless the Board, at its discretion, issues a written finding supported by a majority of the board, explaining in detail that the school district could not remove itself from academic distress during the relevant time period due to external forces beyond the school district's control.

12.0 PROCEDURES FOR ASSISTING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN ACADEMIC DISTRESS

- 12.01 Within thirty (30) calendar days of classification by the State Board, each Academic Distress school district shall develop and file with the Department a modified Comprehensive School Improvement Plan to target and address any area in which the district is experiencing academic distress.
- 12.02 Within fifteen (15) calendar days of classification by the State Board, the Department shall assign a team of educators to evaluate the district and determine the need for on-site technical assistance.
- 12.03 The team of educators shall evaluate and make recommendations to the district superintendent within sixty (60) calendar days following the district's classification as an Academic Distress school district.
- 12.04 School districts classified as Academic Distress shall provide access to all district assessment, instruction, personnel and academic records and reports to assist the team in the formulation of the recommendations for improvement.
- 12.05 The Department with assistance from the team of educators shall review the data relative to the academic status and performance of students in the Academic Distress school district.
- 12.06 Following the on-site review, the team of educators will submit a written set of recommendations to the Academic Distress school district.
- 12.07 The Department shall provide relevant technical assistance to each identified school district based upon the needs identified in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

13.0 PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING AND REMOVAL OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS FROM ACADEMIC DISTRESS STATUS

13.01 The Department shall review and annually report to the Board the academic conditions existing in each Academic Distress school district and determine whether the district is making progress and has fewer than 75% of the students performing in the below basic performance level.

13.02 A school district designated in Academic Distress shall be removed from Academic Distress only if fewer than 75% of the students perform below basic for two consecutive years.

14.00 Board Authority

14.01 The Board shall have the following authority regarding any public school district in academic distress:

14.01.1 Require the superintendent of the school district to relinquish all authority with respect to the district, to appoint an individual to administratively operate the district under the supervision of the Director of the Department, with the cost to be paid from school district funding;

14.01.2 Suspend or remove some or all of the current board of directors and call for the election of a new school board for the school district in which case the school district shall reimburse the county board of election commissioners for election costs as otherwise required by law.

14.01.3 Allow the school district to operate without the local school board under the supervision of the local school district administration or an administration chosen by the Director of the Department;

14.01.4 Waive the application of Arkansas law, with the exception of the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act of 1983, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-1501 et seq., and the Public school Employee Fair Hearing Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-1701 et seq., or department Rules;

14.01.5 The Board has exclusive jurisdiction to determine the boundary lines of the receiving or resulting school district and to allocate assets and liability of the district.

14.01.6 Require the annexation, consolidation, or reconstitution of the public school district; and

14.01.7 Take any other necessary and proper action as determined by the Board that is allowed by law.

14.02 After providing thirty (30) calendar days written notice, via certified mail return receipt requested, to a school district, the Department may petition the Board or the Board on its own motion, at any time, may take action pursuant to 14.01 as allowed by Act 1467 of 2003, in order to secure and protect the best interest of students in the public school district or to

secure and protect the best interest of the educational resources of the state.

- 14.03 The School District shall have a right of appeal to a public hearing before the Board after filing a written notice of appeal with the office of the Director of the Department at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the appeal hearing.
- 14.04 The State Board shall consolidate, annex or reconstitute a school district that fails to remove itself from the classification of a school district in academic distress within two (2) consecutive school years of receipt of notice of identification unless the Board, at its discretion, issues a written finding supported by a majority of the Board, explaining in detail that the school district could not remove itself from academic distress due to impossibility caused by external forces beyond the school district's control.
- 14.05 After a public hearing, the Board shall consolidate, annex, or reconstitute the school district in academic distress to another non-academic distress school district upon a majority vote of a quorum of the members of the Board as permitted or required by this subchapter.
- 14.06 The Board's classification of a school district in Academic Distress shall be final except that the school district shall have a right of appeal to the Circuit Court of Pulaski County pursuant to the Arkansas Administrative Procedures Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-201 et seq.

15.0 School Choice and Academic Distress

- 15.01 Any student attending a public school district classified as being in academic distress shall automatically be eligible and entitled pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-206, the "Arkansas Public School Choice Act", to transfer to another geographically contiguous school district not in academic distress during the time period a district is classified as being in academic distress, and therefore, not be required to file a petition by July 1 but shall meet all other requirements and conditions of the Arkansas Public School Choice Act.
- 15.02 The cost of student transportation to the nonresident district shall be borne by the resident district.
- 15.01 The nonresident district shall count the student for average daily membership purposes.